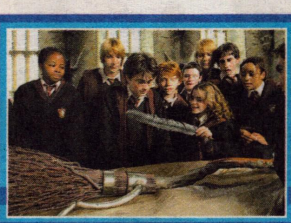
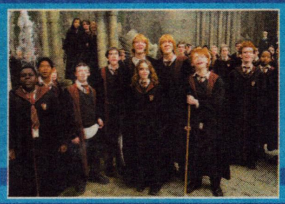
No 769 June 6, 2004

THE FUNDAY TIMES





Azkaban unleashed

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban is now out in cinemas so Funday chats to the film's stars

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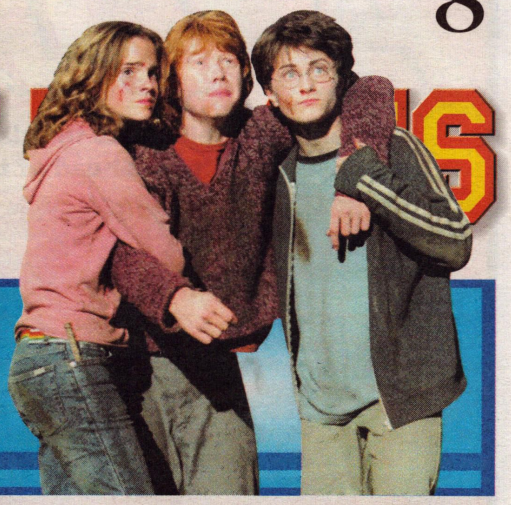
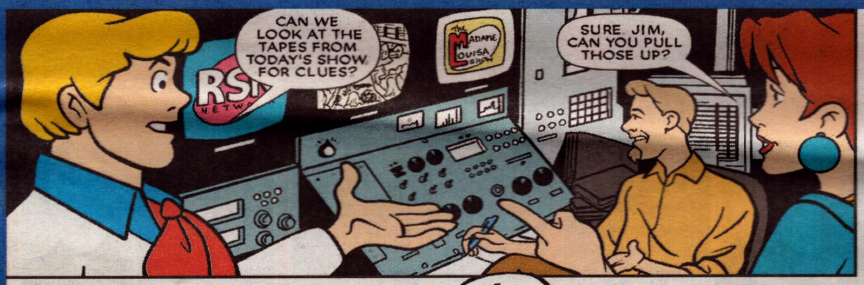
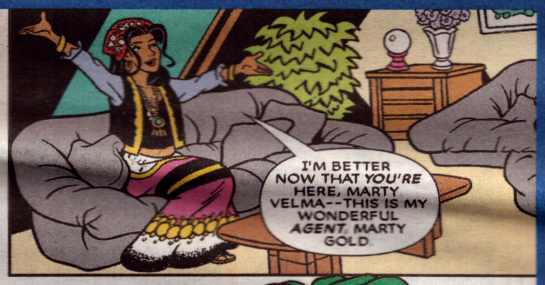


SCOOBY-DOO! in PSYCHIC FIEND NETWORK

The story so far – It appears that TV psychic Madame Louisa has a few jealous rivals who may want to spook her





Continues next week!

A CLASS ACT

Adam Tanswell meets the classical pop group Amici Forever ahead of their UK tour

You're all from different parts of the world. How did you get together?

Geoff: Jo and I were working together in London. We were booked to sing the national anthems for an England versus All Blacks rugby match at Twickenham, but we thought it would sound better with more people.

Jo: That's when we had the idea for a group incorporating two sopranos, two tenors and a bass-baritone.

Nick: We were all singers on the circuit here in the UK, apart from Tsakane, so through mutual friends we all got together.

Tsakane: And the musical director knew me from visiting South Africa.

David: You've had the Three Tenors and solo classical artists, but never a group like this.

How did you come up with the band's name?

Geoff: We started off with the name Tenors and Divas, but it didn't work because we had a bass-baritone too.

David: People said we looked more like the cast of Friends than opera singers. Since we sing so much in Italian we thought about the Italian word for friend, amici.

Jo: But we also wanted to be around for a long time so we added forever – Amici Forever.

Were you all brought up solely on opera music?

Tsakane: No, we all just fell into it.

Nick: When we were young people told us we had good voices and suggested we train them up.

Jo: I think it's important for people to know that just because we sing opera doesn't mean we don't like other stuff as well.

Tsakane: At home I'm always listening to The Darkness.

Geoff: And I'm a big fan of The Black Eyed Peas.

What can we expect at an Amici Forever concert?

Geoff: Loads from our album, and some cheeky little surprises.

Nick: Don't be put off by thinking it's a classical concert – it's very informal.

Jo: It's not quite a Beyoncé gig, but there are some funkier songs and ballads as well as Italian numbers.

MEET THE BAND

Nick Garrett – bass-baritone
From London
I'm the bass-baritone of the group, which means I've got the lowest voice. How would I describe the others? Geoff's got loads of energy, Jo is sometimes dizzy, Tsakane is the baby of the group and David is the good-looking one.

Tsakane Valentine – soprano
From South Africa
Last year, we played in front of 67,000 people at the Champions League final. There were 500m people watching it on TV.

It's funny to think we used to practise in Geoff's flat and annoy his neighbours.

David Habbin – tenor
From Hampshire
It's a mistake to think we're just about opera. There are three opera tracks on our album, but we're not trying to sell everyone into the idea of going to the opera house. We're just doing our music, and we happen to sing with opera training.

Jo Appleby – soprano
From Lancashire
Before I was 19 I'd never been to an opera. You might think it's this big scary world where you won't understand the words or the music, but it's actually just good tunes, sung with a lot of passion.

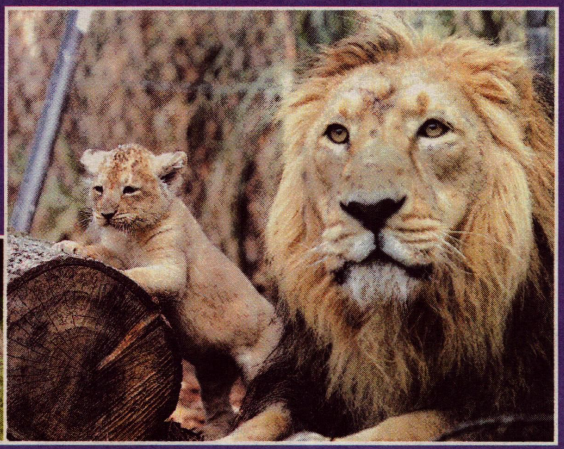
Geoff Sewell – tenor
From New Zealand
We were scared about how we were going to go down at last year's CBBC Prom in the Park. There were acts like Busted and Big Brovaz on the bill, but it was cool to spot Amici Forever banners – thankfully the crowd went crazy for us.

For Amici Forever's UK tour dates click on www.amiciforever.com The group's debut album, The Opera Band, is out now

COVER CARTOON SCOOBY-DOO AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS AND ELEMENTS ARE TRADEMARKS OF AND © HANNA-BARBERA (S04)

CUTE!

These six-week-old lion cubs made their first public appearance recently at Chessington World of Adventures, in Surrey, to a roaring reception!



THE FUNDAY TIMES

COMPETITIONS

Send answers to all competitions to us at: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU95 1AY or funday.comps@sunday-times.co.uk [only one e-mail per entrant please]
Competition deadline: June 16
Entrants to Funday competitions must be 16 and under.

F-MAIL

Send your letters, cartoons, jokes and drawings to: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GX or funday.times@sunday-times.co.uk

NOT RECEIVED YOUR PRIZE?

Please telephone 020 7711 1521 or e-mail custserv@fundaytimes.co.uk

GOT A NEWS STORY?

Please telephone 020 7782 7415 or e-mail funday.news@sunday-times.co.uk

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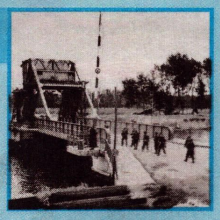
7 DAYS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD THIS WEEK

TODAY



D-Day – the biggest ever land, sea and air military operation – took place 60 years ago. Around 156,000 Allied troops, mostly from Great Britain, Canada and the USA, landed on the beaches of Normandy. The Queen and Tony Blair will be joining veterans at commemorative events in France • Known as the Oscars of the American theatre, the Tony Awards are being handed out in New York • It's British Naturist Day. Thousands of people will celebrate by taking their clothes off!

MONDAY

The Vatican City, the residence of the Pope, was established 75 years ago in Rome. Covering an area of just 0.44km², it has a population of less than 1,000 people • MPs return to the House of Commons after the Whitsun Recess • TV star Tara Palmer-Tomkinson [right] will be talking to Oxford University students.

TUESDAY

The heart of Louis XVII will be buried in St Denis's royal crypt. The French king died in 1795, aged 10, and his heart was removed and stored in alcohol. The burial takes place after DNA tests proved it really is the monarch's heart • Venus falls in line with the Earth and the Sun for the first time since 1882 • The Hampton Court Festival opens with an evening of Vivaldi by violinist Nigel Kennedy.

WEDNESDAY

The English National Ballet perform Swan Lake at London's Royal Albert Hall. More than 300,000 people have seen this incredible production, which features a cast of 120, including jugglers and acrobats • Sigourney Weaver hosts the 2004 FiFi Awards for fragrances in New York. Posh pongs on the shortlist include Celine Dion Parfums and Stella by Stella McCartney.

THURSDAY

It's local election day in England. London residents can also vote for the capital's mayor. Current mayor Ken Livingstone won the first election in 2000 • Happy 76th birthday to Maurice Sendak [above]. The talented artist and writer is the author of the classic book Where The Wild Things Are, which is to be made into a film next year • The Royal Cornwall Show runs for the next three days at Wadebridge. Attractions include the RAF Falcons Parachute team, police dog demonstrations and camel racing.

FRIDAY

The Cassini-Huygens spacecraft is due to fly past Saturn's outermost moon, Phoebe. Launched in 1997 as a joint Nasa, European Space Agency and Italian Space Agency mission, the craft will spend the next four years transmitting back information about Saturn and its moon and rings • The Beard Liberation Front launches Beard Week 2004! Organised to promote the growth of facial hair, there will even be an award for the most beard-friendly sandwich.

SATURDAY

Anne Frank [left] was born 75 years ago. Her famous diary detailed her family's life hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam and was published two years after her death in 1945 • Bike Week 2004 begins and 1,500 events are planned to encourage us to get on two wheels and raise money for the Leukaemia Research Fund • The smallest town in Britain, Llanwrtyd Wells, is the venue for the Man v Horse Marathon. Around 300 runners will compete against 30 mounted horses over 35km. Any runner who beats the first horse will pick up £25,000 – but no-one has managed it yet!

NEWS

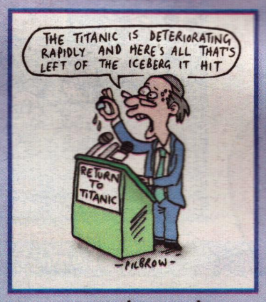
ROLL ON!

Starlight Express, the roller-skating musical that ran in London's West End for nearly 18 years, is back. A new production of the hit show will tour the UK later this year, playing in Manchester, Sunderland, Bristol, Oxford, Edinburgh, Southampton and Liverpool. "It will be the best-ever Starlight Express," the show's director and choreographer, Arlene Phillips told Funday. "It has new music, new choreography and an exciting new 3-D film element, which hasn't been in the show before." Tickets are on sale now, so get your skates on!

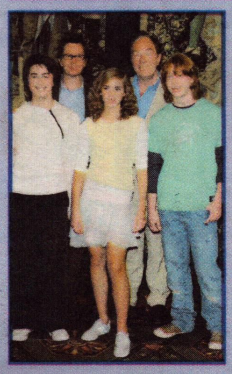
DOUBLE CELEBRATION

Ever felt one birthday a year just isn't enough? The Queen certainly agrees – she has two! Born on April 21, she also celebrates an official birthday on the first, second or third Saturday in June. The tradition started with George VI, the Queen's father, who was born in December. Because the weather usually spoilt the celebrations, an extra birthday was created! This year it's next Saturday and it will be marked by the Trooping the Colour parade – as it has been since 1748. The colour, or flag, is trooped by being marched slowly past all the men of the regiment. This custom dates from the 17th century when the colours were used on a rallying point on the battlefield – so it was vital every soldier knew which colours they needed to find.

DEEP TROUBLE



Robert Ballard often gets a sinking feeling. He's made more than 100 deep-sea expeditions and has located the German battleship Bismarck and two ancient Phoenician craft, the oldest shipwrecks ever found in deep water. But he's best known for finding the Titanic in September 1985. Nearly 20 years later, Robert is returning to solve a new mystery. The remains of the Titanic have begun deteriorating rapidly but no one knows the cause. Using the latest digital imaging systems, Robert will see if anything can be done to preserve the wreck before it completely collapses. The amazing underwater scenes will be shown live on National Geographic Channel at 2am on Tuesday – and repeated later at 8pm. Why not take the plunge and set the video.



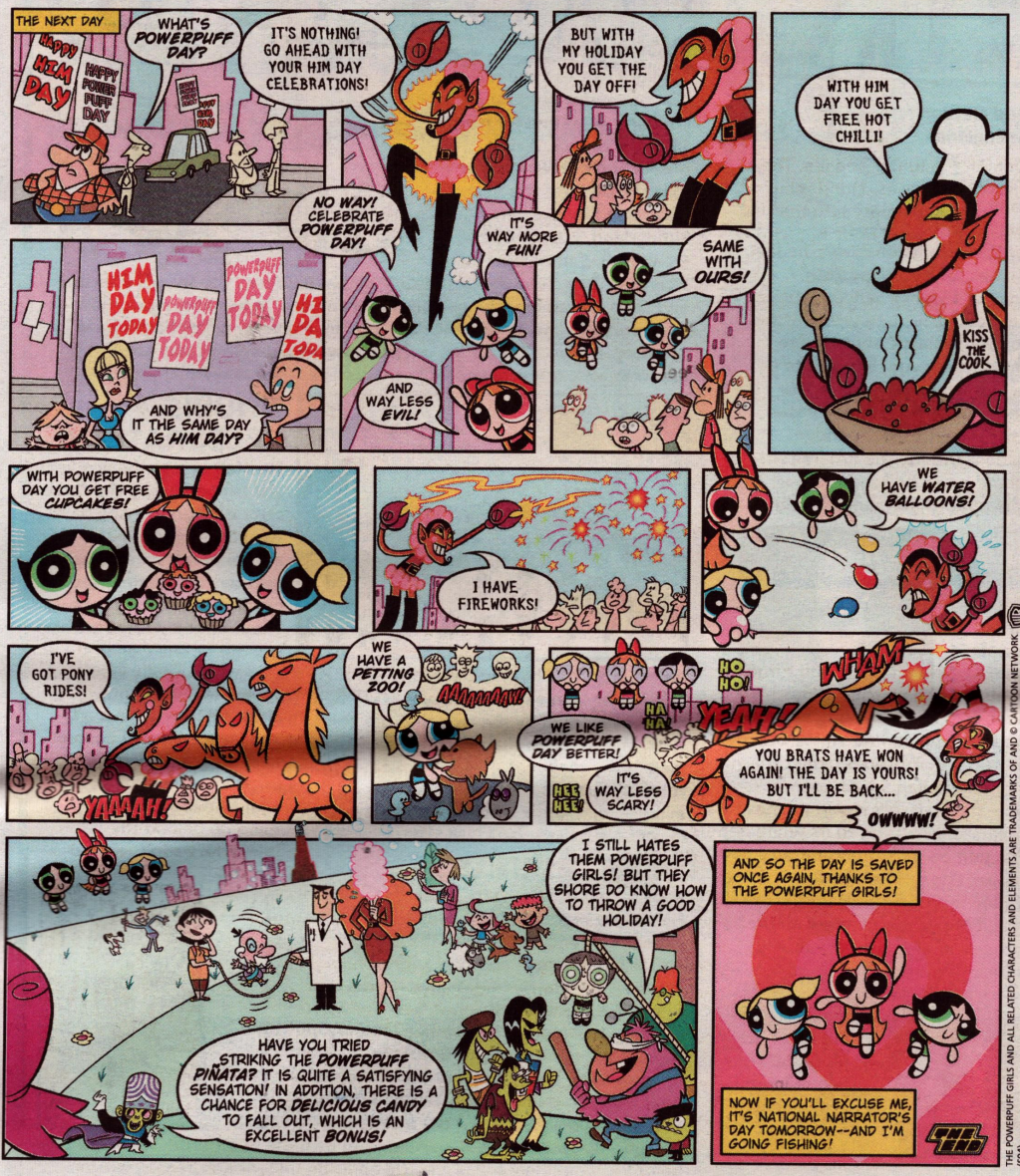
RAINY SPELL

Harry Potter youngsters Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson talked about filming in Scotland for Prisoner of Azkaban at the recent Hogwarts-themed press launch at the Banqueting House in London. "What I loved about filming in Scotland was that you got a sense of the geography of Hogwarts and the area around it," said Daniel. "We had one beautiful day of sunshine but we couldn't film because of continuity reasons. We had to wait for rain!" added Emma aka Hermione. The weather was of no concern for Rupert, though. "Scotland was wicked for me because I've just got into golf and there's loads of courses there," he grinned.

PICTURES: REUTERS/MICHAEL CRABTREE, PA/ANDY BUTTERTON/IAN WEST/YUI MOK, AFP, AP/LUCA BRUNO/YUKIO GION, ©NICHOLAS BAILEY/REX FEATURES

THE POWERPUFF GIRLS HELLIDAY

The story so far – The evil Him is intent on a self-serving Him Day for the folks of Townsville, but the girls have a new plan



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WORDWISE

.....HARRY POTTER.....

Creating Buckbeak the **hippogriff** was one of the most expensive special effects ever. A hippogriff is a mythical monster with a horse's body and an eagle's head, wings and claws. The name comes from *hippos*, meaning "horse" in Greek and *gryphus*, meaning griffin – a mythical beast with a lion's body and an eagle's head – in Latin. Here are some of the other fabulous animals that make an appearance in the Harry Potter series:

basilisk basilisks
NOUN **1** [in classical legend] a serpent that could kill by its breath or glance. **2** a small lizard found in tropical America.
HISTORY: from *basiliskos*, a Greek word for a kind of snake.

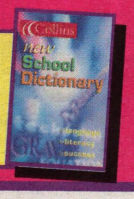
centaur centaurs
Said "**sen**-tawr" NOUN a creature in Greek mythology with the top half of a man and the lower body and legs of a horse.

dragon dragons
NOUN in stories and legends, a dragon is a fierce creature like a large lizard with wings and claws that breathes fire.
HISTORY: from Greek *drakōn* meaning "serpent".

phoenix phoenixes
Said "**fee**-niks" NOUN an imaginary bird, which according to myth, burns itself to ashes every five hundred years and rises from the fire again.

unicorn unicorns
NOUN a mythical animal that looks like a white horse with a straight horn growing from its forehead.
HISTORY: from Latin *unicornis* meaning "having one horn".

Collins New School English Dictionary [2nd Edition, ISBN 0-00-712636-0, paperback £5.99]



f-mail

TWIN TIME

Movie stars Mary-Kate and Ashley are making it big on the small screen. In smash sitcom So Little Time, the talented twins star as teenage sisters Chloe and Riley mixing high school with high jinks. Now So Little Time Volume 1: School's Cool is out to own on DVD and VHS [cert U] so you can join in the fun time and time again.
The star f-mailer will receive a So Little Time DVD from Warner Home Video, plus a DVD player and a set of So Little Time books from HarperCollins. The other f-mailers will receive a copy of the DVD and a set of the books.

Ailbhe Keane, 11, Galway, Ireland

Dear f-mail,
Our country has become too celebrity based. One day we hear that people are too fat because we eat too many fatty foods which are made to look "cool" on TV like in the Walker's adverts with Gary Lineker. Then the next day, we hear about people who are too thin because they are trying to look like skinny celebrities in magazines and on TV! It shows how easily people are influenced and how we lead our lives the way adverts and magazines say we should and not by common sense. There are many people in poorer countries who would love the option of eating healthily like we can, so why don't we take advantage of it?
Marion C, 15, via e-mail

Knock knock.
Who's there?
Cows go.
Cows go who?
No, they don't, they go moo!
Francesca Brown, via e-mail

Write a wrong, let off steam with f-mail!

BLEAK WORLD

Read our exclusive extract from Troll Fell by Katherine Langrish, a new tale packed with adventure, treasure and troublesome trolls

Peer Ulfsson stood miserably at his father's funeral pyre, watching the sparks whirl up like millions of shining spirits streaking away into the dark. Dizzily he followed their bright career, unwilling to lower his eyes. The fire gobbled everything like a starving monster, crackling and crunching on bone-dry branches, hissing and spitting on green timber, licking up dribbles of resin from bleeding chunks of pinewood.

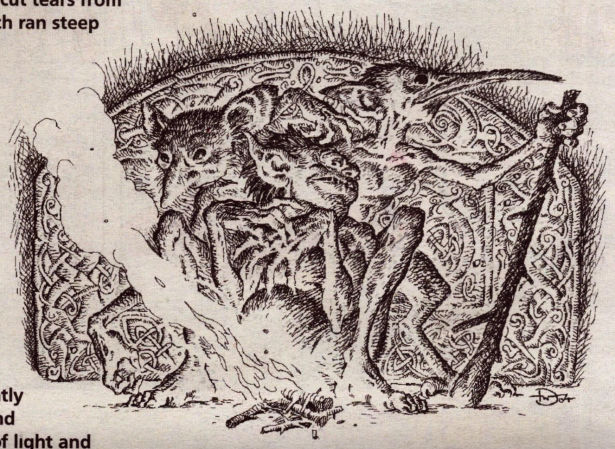
The heat struck his face and scorched his clothes. Tears baked on his cheeks. But his back was freezing, and a raw wind fingered the nape of his neck.

Father! thought Peer desperately. *Where have you gone?*

Suddenly he was sure the whole thing must be a bad dream. If he turned round, his father would be standing close, ready to give him a comforting squeeze. *Behind me – just behind me!* thought Peer. He turned slowly, stiffly, wanting to see his father's thin, tanned face carved with deep lines of laughter and life. The black wind cut tears from his eyes. The sloping shingle beach ran steep and empty into the sea.

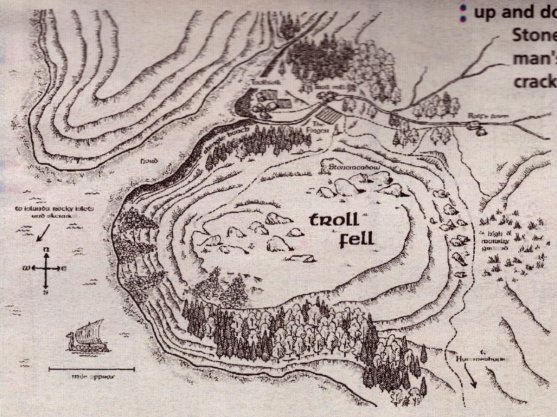
A small body bumped Peer's legs. He reached down. His dog Loki leaned against him, a rough-haired, flea-bitten brown mongrel – all the family Peer had left. Friends and neighbours crowded in a ring around the pyre, patiently watching and waiting. Their faces were curves of light and hollows of darkness: the flames lit up their steaming breath like dragon-smoke; they blew on their fingers and turned up their collars against the piercing wind.

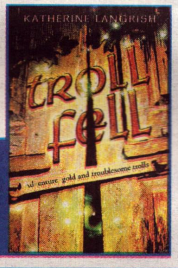
The heat struck his face and scorched his clothes. Tears baked on his cheeks. But his back was freezing, and a raw wind fingered the nape of his neck



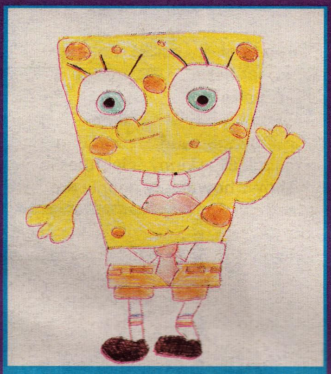
The pyre flung violent shadows up and down the beach. Stones bigger than a man's head blackened and cracked around it. Hidden in its white depths his father's body lay, folded in flames. Over the fire the night air wobbled and shook, magnifying the shapes of the people opposite. It was like looking through a magic glass into a world of ghosts and monsters, perhaps the world to which his father's spirit was passing, beginning the long journey to the land of the dead. Peer gazed, awed, into the hot shimmer. *What if he comes to me? What if I see him?* Smoke unravelled in the air like half-finished gestures. Was that a pale face turning towards him? A dim arm waving? Peer's breath stuck. A shadow lurched into life, beyond the fire. *It can't be!* He glanced round in panic. *Can anyone else see it?* The shadow tramped forwards, man-shaped, looming up behind the people, who hadn't noticed – who still hadn't noticed – Peer gave a strangled shout: "What's that?"

Peer's breath stuck. A shadow lurched into life, beyond the fire. It can't be! He glanced round in panic. Can anyone else see it?



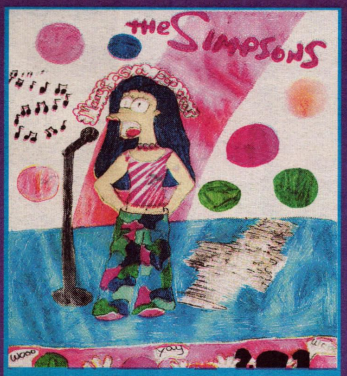


Troll Fell by Katherine Langrish is published tomorrow by HarperCollins, £10.99

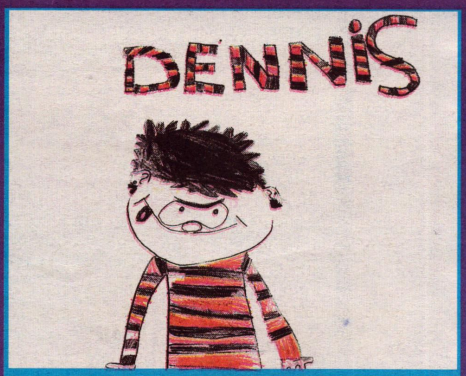


Susan Fogarty, 12, Ireland

Dear f-mail,
A lady came to my school recently to talk about recycling. She said that if we don't start recycling a lot more, in six years' time all of the rubbish tips in England will be full and people will have to dig new ones in the countryside. I think recycling is very important and we should have more recycling centres.
Rebecca Lawrence, 9, Devizes



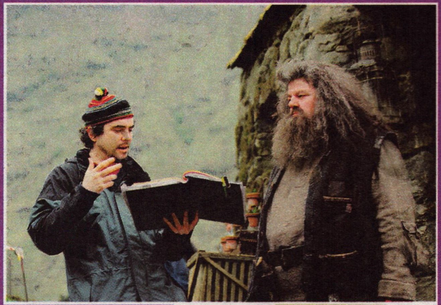
Alice Evans, 10, Knighton

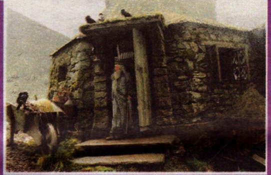


Alex Richards, 6, Harrogate

PRISONER RELEASE

Paul Wray meets the cast of Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban





BIG GUY

Robbie Coltrane tells us all about playing Hogwarts' favourite, Hagrid

How's Hagrid different this time around?
He's more in touch with his feminine side! No ...
Well, he becomes a teacher so he sort of becomes an authority figure. He doesn't do very well, which is kind of what he wanted to happen because he's always been halfway between being a member of staff and being a friend of the children.
Do you have more creatures to deal with in this film?
Yes, the hut's much busier. Cuarón [the director] is such a funny man, the first day we were in Hagrid's Hut he said: "This man is supposed to be obsessed with crazy creatures and there's nothing here but a teapot." So, he went away and two hours later you couldn't get in for snakes and bats. Everywhere you went there were these things, there must have been about 100 things in there.
Did you like the idea of Alfonso Cuarón taking over as director?
I've seen his work and I really do like it, particularly A Little Princess which was so imaginative. He's doesn't believe in close-ups. He's a really passionate man who loves film-making and making films ... he's my sort of director.
Do young Harry Potter fans recognise you in the street?
They don't recognise me behind all that fungus on my face. It's the damn parents, they want Brownie points. On planes, you get really pompous middle-age business men coming up saying: "I've never read them myself but my children are obsessed with Harry Potter. Would you mind signing this?" So, I have a laugh: "Say it's for you or I won't sign it!"
Have you noticed Daniel, Emma and Rupert growing up?
Funnily enough, I was talking about this the other day. The first day where we had a scene together in this film, I looked at them and thought: "Blimey they are not kids any more." I was talking to Daniel saying he is at the age where he's allowed to have the odd teenage tantrum, such as: "Why do I have to do all the acting? I'm staying in my trailer and I'm not going to tidy it!"
How would you have coped as a 14-year-old dealing with being a movie star?
I can't imagine it. But Daniel, Emma and Rupert are just so cool about it. I think it's because they're together a lot of the time and they're from balanced families. They cope with it incredibly well. Daniel went to Japan last year and there were about 3,000 fans screaming at him at the airport. It was like The Beatles. It doesn't affect him, though. I couldn't deal with that. I tried to imagine what it would be like but I honestly can't. How would you prepare a child for that?

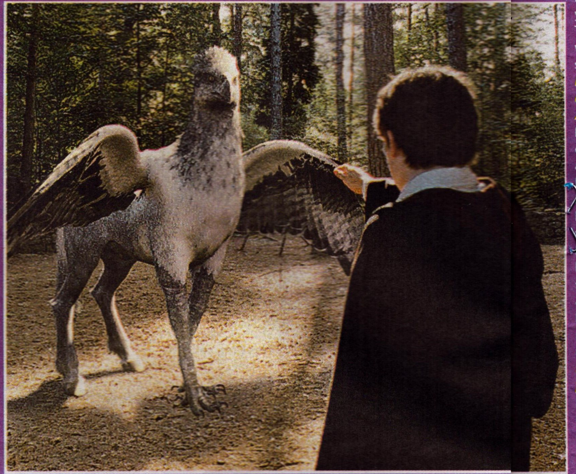
GROWING UP

Now 14, Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson talk about their roles as Harry and Hermione

How has changing director from Chris Columbus in the first movies to Alfonso Cuarón in the third affected you?
Daniel: The difference between Chris and Alfonso is that Chris has this very high-energy approach to filming, which suited the first two films perfectly. Whereas in this one, Alfonso has this laid-back emotional intensity which suits the material of the third one. Also, everything that I learned with Chris over the past two, I'm now getting a chance to put into practice with a new director. It's different but it's fun.
What else is different in Azkaban?
Daniel: Obviously, all of us have got older. We have a new Dumbledore played by Michael Gambon. No-one could ever replace Richard Harris [who played Dumbledore in the first two movies, before his death]. But the first day Michael Gambon came on set and started, I couldn't think of anyone better to fill Richard's shoes.

Emma: It's weird because it's really hard for him to take over from someone who did such a brilliant job, but I thought it was brilliant that he didn't try to copy Richard in anyway. He's changed the role a bit and made it his own.
Daniel: Also the development of all the characters. There's such a huge change between the second and third books, the biggest out of all the books.
Emma: The first one, you are introduced to the characters; the second one, you are getting to know the characters; and the third one, they are really defined – so you find elements of their personalities that you haven't seen before.
Daniel, you've been quoted as saying the Prisoner of Azkaban is your favourite of the books. Is that true?
Daniel: Definitely. What I loved about the third book was that the first two books used Voldemort as the main source of fear, but that changed in book three. I thought the fifth book was great too, a fantastic book. What I like is that J K Rowling never patronises kids. The classic line she said is: "If you want to write children's books, you have to be a ruthless killer," which I think is fantastic. It's true, you have to be ruthless when you are writing them. That's what I thought was great about someone dying.

Emma, you get your own cat in the Prisoner of Azkaban ...
Emma: Yes I do. I love my cat, Crookshanks. It's a beautiful cat.
Daniel: It's horrific!
Emma: No it's not. It looks like it's been hit with a pan but ...
Daniel: Exactly. It looks like it's been born and someone's chucked it against the wall!
Emma: No, it's really pretty. It's an ugly-beautiful cat.
Daniel, we hear you like punk music?
Basically, I'm into all kinds of rock music. All that stuff gets my energy up. Music helps me the most with scenes. It helps to give me thoughts and if I think about certain songs that suit a scene, that seems to really help.



Have you have any bizarre fan experiences?
Emma: [whispering to Daniel] After you, the MTV girl ...
Daniel: Oh the towel girl! I'd forgotten about her! Okay, there are two main ones. There's one when I did MTV in America and there was one girl who was standing outside wearing nothing but a Harry Potter towel saying: "Nothing gets between me and Harry Potter!" And we invited her in because it was freezing and she'd been standing outside for four-and-a-half hours. I've met her, which was really cool. And the other one was going to Japan at the end of 2002 and we had a call on the plane saying there were quite a few people there so be ready. When I arrived, there were actually 3,000 people waiting for me, which was amazing, if slightly scary. I think 80% were girls and they were aged from about three to 30, all age groups.
Have you ever been star struck?
Daniel: Emma, you've met some cool people.
Emma: Well, I've met Pierce Brosnan, Halle Berry, Brad Pitt. I've met loads of people at the premieres ... Hear'Say.
Daniel: I didn't meet Hear'Say.
Emma: Thank God you didn't! Keep Daniel well away.
Daniel: I would have been expressing my views on manufactured pop at that time! One of my favourite bands is called Feeder and they were making a video at Shepperton Studios. I met them and I got a signed drumskin, and they signed some albums for me and the drummer let me keep his sticks. And I met Ben Stiller and Tim Robbins as well, which was really cool.
Emma, tell us about Brad Pitt.
Emma: Yes, with pleasure! The guy who's the head of Warner Bros came over to have a look at the sets and have meetings. He asked if there was anything I wanted or anyone I want to meet. I said: " No, not really." Then my chaperone piped up and said that I quite liked Brad Pitt. Who wouldn't? He said: "Okay you'll get to meet him." One day, they said they were taking me to Shepperton Studios to do some voice overs and I was moaning and groaning, but when I arrived Brad Pitt was standing there. You should have seen my face.

WANTED MAN

Established actor Gary Oldman is a newcomer to the Harry Potter movies, as the mysterious Sirius Black

Gary, what was the appeal of the role of Sirius Black?
I thought it would be nice to be in a movie that my kids can see. I like Alfonso's work. I thought it was interesting that the Harry Potter people had decided not to play safe. It's quite a wildcard, using Alfonso, so that makes it exciting. This is going to be a very different film from the other two. I think it's going to be interesting. I also thought it would be fun to be part of a film dynasty.
How do you find working with young actors?
It's been one of the most enjoyable jobs. Daniel, Emma and Rupert are not spoilt and are so down to earth. They take it seriously but they also have a sense of fun. I was blown away by how wonderful they are. The whole team that has been assembled to bring this to the screen – the make-up artists and crew – have done the three Harry Potter movies and it's rather like joining a family.
What's the most difficult part of doing a Harry Potter movie?
It's a four-hour shooting day stretched out over 12 hours because the kids have to have breaks and they have to have schooling. You'll do one scene shooting one way, then you will go off and shoot something else for a fortnight and then come back to shoot a couple of different angles on that scene you where filming two weeks before. So, that means to have to get all that energy and focus that you had, you just have to get it back and get it up to speed again for the shots to match. It's quite hard and challenging.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban [cert PG] is at cinemas now

THE FUNDAY TIMES

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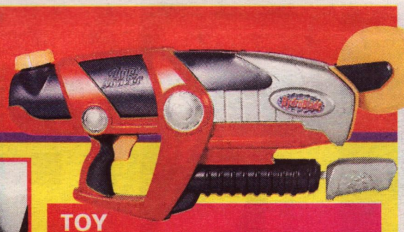
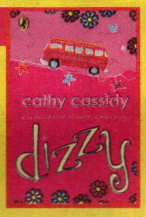
FRESH! THIS WEEK



SINGLE

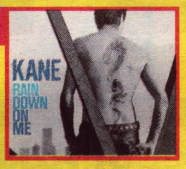
MAKIN' OUT
Mark Owen
Mark Owen has always dabbled with indie sounds and Makin' Out has a touch of Turin Brakes or Keane about it, while still retaining a pop tinge. With its rolling piano and guitar chorus, Mark's latest is an anthemic track that doesn't quite hit the heights of an indie classic, but it's got a furtive catchiness.

BOOK



DIZZY Cathy Cassidy
When Dizzy's mum – Storm – suddenly appears after leaving her when she was little, Dizzy is whisked off to hippy heaven on the earth-loving festival circuit. But soon this heady life doesn't seem so cool. An entertaining book about responsibility and lost childhood from a new author in the Jacqueline Wilson mould.

SINGLE



RAIN DOWN ON ME Kane
Alongside Rasmus, Kane are proving that credible rock doesn't just come from the US and UK but from Europe too. This four-piece from Holland have been touring with Maroon 5 and Rain Down on Me is their first UK single. This accomplished power ballad isn't instantly memorable but it points to a band to watch out for.

TOY

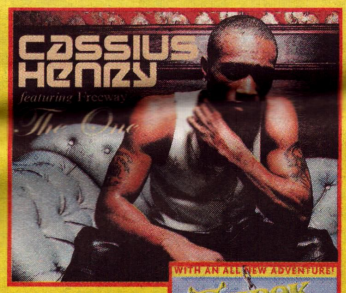
SUPER SOAKERS HYDRO BLADE
Super Soakers are fantastic for hot weather water squirting and the Hydro Blade [£14.99] boasts a whole litre of water to pump at people. Plus its spinning disk can drench anyone in a 10m radius when lowered into the water jet stream. If you want to make a splash this summer, the Hydro Blade will get you noticed!

FILM

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN [cert PG]
Thanks to a darker, more complex story and a moodier, larger look – Prisoner of Azkaban sees Harry coming of age. Harry, Ron and Hermione are at their best yet and newcomers Emma Thompson, David Thewlis and Gary Oldman add both laughs and suspense – making this a real magic potion. The best Potter movie so far.

SINGLE

THE ONE Cassius Henry feat. Freeway
Cassius Henry scored a top 30 hit in 2002 with Broke, but The One should push this 23-year-old Londoner much higher in the charts. It's got a killer bassline, a quickfire rap from Freeway and Cassius's own soulful vocals to make The One a funky chunk of R&B. Cassius scores a knock-out!



PLAYSTATION 2

SINGSTAR
Sing along to your heart's content with the fantastic Singstar. Plug the mics into your PS2 and croon to cool pop tunes, and some golden oldies for your parents. The game's technology rates your singing voice, based on pitch and timing as the song video plays. While Pop Idol is slightly naff, this has pop-star savvy. A big hit!

HOLIDAY HOTEL

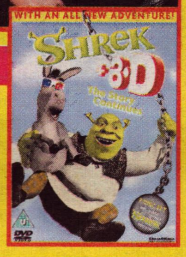
SOL MILANOS PINGUINOS
Have stone age fun in the Spanish sun with Fred, Wilma, Barney, Betty and Dino at the new Flintstones-themed Sol Milanos Pinguinos and Sol Falco hotels, in Menorca. With non-stop entertainment, activities and kids clubs, it's yabba dabba doo. For more info, click on www.solmilanospinguinos.solmelia.com

SINGLE

TAKE MY HAND Jurgen Vries feat. Andrea Britton
Summer must be on its way as Jurgen Vries [aka DJ Darren Tate] releases his latest swirling, dance anthem. Andrea Britton provides the vocals on this familiar-sounding, laid-back trance track which even after a couple of plays doesn't really elevate itself above any other chillout tune. Just average.

DVD

SHREK 3-D SPECIAL EDITION [cert U]
With Shrek 2 out on July 2, this two-disc DVD with the original Shrek and a new 14-minute 3-D adventure will remind you how much fun being an ogre is. The cheekily charming 3-D film stands out on its own with lots of banter and spills, plus genuine 3-D moments, such as dragons and spiders jumping out at you!



GOOD OK BAD

PICTURE ©WARNER BROS. PICTURES 2004. PUBLISHING RIGHTS ©JK ROWLING

WIN IT!

TOP TRUNKS

Whipsnade Wild Animal Park is celebrating the new arrival of an elephant calf, which was the Bedfordshire park's first Asian elephant birth. And if you are wild about wildlife too, get involved in Whipsnade's animal adoption scheme which helps to keep its creatures in comfort and protect them in the wild.

Thanks to Whipsnade, one lucky Funday reader can adopt the park's new baby elephant. The adoption package includes a certificate, photographs of the elephant, plus a VIP day at Whipsnade for the winner and family [two adults, two children]. During the visit, the winner will meet its keeper and get a unique animal experience [which might involve feeding some of the animals]. The prize also includes £50 towards travel. Plus, five runners-up will win family tickets to either Whipsnade or London Zoo. For more details on the two animal attractions, log on to www.whipsnade.co.uk or www.londonzoo.co.uk

To enter, tell us which has the bigger ears – the African or Indian elephant.

Mark your entry WHIPSNADE and send it, with your name, age and home telephone number, to the competition address on page 2.

SPACE CADETS

In Eoin Colfer's latest book, The Supernaturalist, there's no sign of Artemis Fowl! Damian Kelleher meets the Irish author for the lowdown on his new sci-fi-based story

After three Artemis Fowl adventures, did you feel ready to write something new?
Yes, it was time to move on. It's always a risk to go and do something else, but you can't spend a year on your own in a room if you don't want to be doing what you're doing. And I will go back to Artemis. I'd like every second or third book I write to be an Artemis Fowl novel.

Artemis Fowl fans won't be disappointed, will they?
I hope not. It does have the same elements – there's an awful lot of technology and lots of quick-fire action. I think the fans will like it. It should keep them going until the next Artemis book.

There's a great mix of characters in this book. What can you tell us about the Supernaturalists?
Cosmo is the new recruit – he's like a fish out of water, which is a bit of a theme in my books. Stefan is the leader – originally I wrote about him as an adult, but I made him a teenager in the end. Then there's Mona, whose job it is to fix the machines. But the most unusual character is Ditto – he's a man in a little kid's body. He'll turn out to be the most popular character with the readers, I reckon, like Mulch Diggums in the Artemis books.

The Supernaturalists are a bit like the X-Men, aren't they?
When you get four vigilantes, it's hard to make them unlike any other superhero group – even though these guys aren't superheroes. I didn't want them to wear costumes, for example. The X-Men have all these wonderful Spandex costumes and gadgets, but my lot live in poverty. When Cosmo first sees their hideaway he says: "Not exactly the Batcave." It's all very shabby.

Have you always wanted to write a sci-fi adventure?
I've always loved sci-fi and graphic novels. My favourite writer is William Gibson. I have always liked him and Philip K Dick. I still read them.

The action comes thick and fast. Is it hard to keep up the relentless pace?
For me, it's hard to slow down. I don't tend to write big descriptive passages. Instead of writing all about Satellite City, for instance, I'll write one or two things and let your mind fill in the rest.

At one point, Cosmo thinks he's in a cartoon and it reads like a comic strip adventure. Was that a new idea you had while writing this book?
I always see my books in cartoon fashion. I'm a bit of a comic collector myself. My favourite at the moment is Hellboy. I got one of his graphic novels in America and immediately ordered all the rest. They're very gothic.

The Supernaturalist has been described as The Matrix meets Ghostbusters. But there's a shot of ER in there too, isn't there?
Yes, kids watch these shows all the time. They've seen ER, Bladerunner, whatever, so none of this is beyond them. I think there is an assumption that we couldn't write about paramedics for kids, but they do know all that stuff.

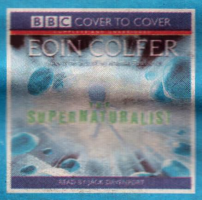
What do you think of Jack Davenport's reading of The Supernaturalist for the audiobook?
I think Jack does a sterling job. His English accent is a good anchor for the different regional voices he has to do. He probably hates me for all those accents, but he does them brilliantly.

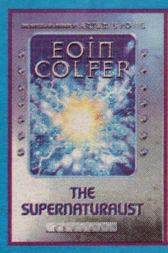
It's a tricky one to read. How many accents did you put in there?
Spanish, French, Irish, Russian. I wanted it to be very cosmopolitan – that's the way that cities are going, which is a good thing. I can imagine actors groaning as I introduce yet another accent ... Swahili perhaps! They must think I am trying for some kind of record.

Do you ever imagine someone reading the story while you're writing it?
I don't usually think that far ahead, or I might have some sympathy for the poor actor!

Adults will enjoy The Supernaturalist too, won't they?
I think people such as Philip Pullman are changing attitudes towards books for children. It's very hard now to tell the difference between a Philip Pullman book and an adult book really – except kids are the main characters. A good book can be read by anybody. I can read Captain Underpants to my son and howl with laughter at the jokes there. It's just a good book!

The Supernaturalist, read by Jack Davenport, is out on BBC Audiobooks tomorrow. Available on CD or cassette, priced £15.99





What's the plot?

It's the third millennium and 14-year-old orphan Cosmo Hill escapes from the Clarissa Frayne Institute for Parentally Challenged Boys on Satellite City. But after an accident, as he tries to run away, a strange blue parasite starts sucking the life from Cosmo – until a gang of kids burst onto the scene and blast the blue critter to smithereens. Welcome to the bizarre world of the Supernaturalists!

PICTURES: CRISPIN RODWELL

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SOUND WAVES

Could your voice sell a record? Thanks to Fruittella Juice Waves and Great Experience Days, three readers will be able to find out ... with a day at a professional recording studio.

Fruittella Juice Waves are new sticks of deliciously different chews with real fruit bits. Flavours include sensational strawberry, out-of-this-world orange and berrylicious blueberry – they're worth singing about!

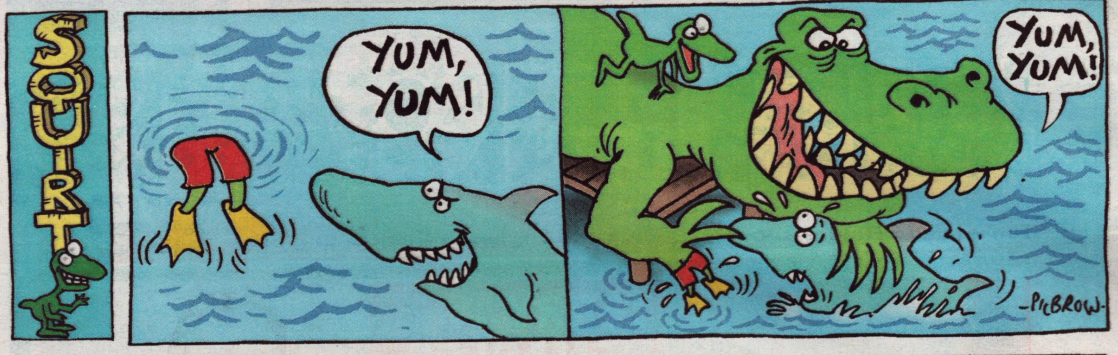
Three Funday winners [with a friend and a parent or guardian each] will spend a day at a recording studio in either Warwickshire or Cheshire with a professional music producer. At the end of the day, each winner will get their own CD – showcasing their voice talents. The prize also includes £50 towards travel for each winner.

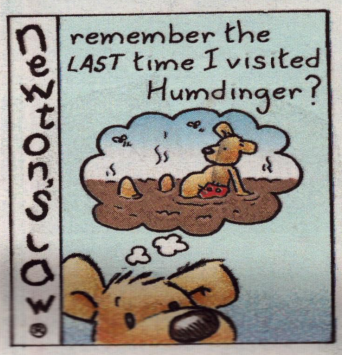
To enter, tell us which female singer hit the top 10 recently with Single

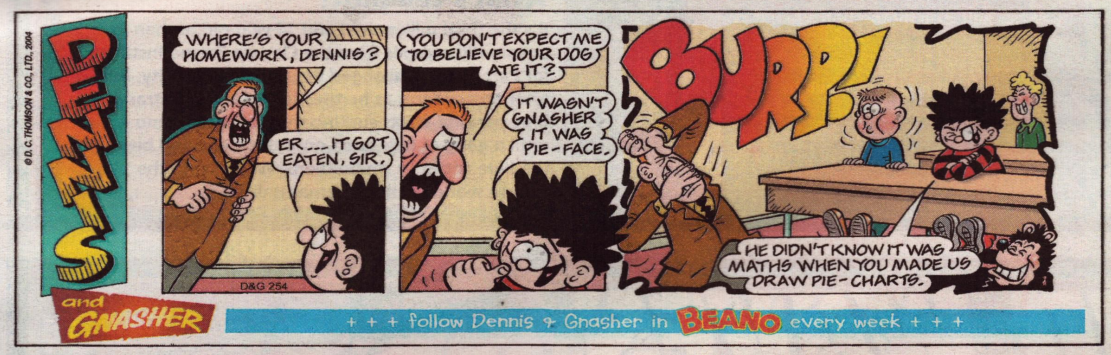
Mark your entry FRUITTELLA and send it, with your name, age and home telephone number, to the competition address on page 2.

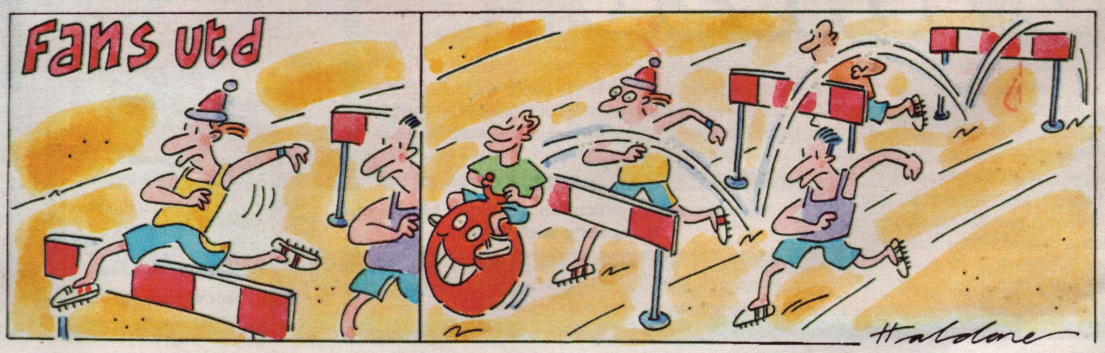
Fruittella Juice Wave
greatexperiencedays.co.uk

Normal TNL competition rules apply to all Funday Times competitions









QF QUICKFIRE

AMY LEE FROM EVANESCENCE

How tidy was your room when you left this morning?
How tidy? Not at all.

What CD is on your player right now?
I don't have a CD player here. I have an MP3 player with 10 CDs which has my essential stuff.

Which TV shows do you catch if you can?
I don't know if you guys will even know what they are but I love Family Guy – that's probably my favourite show – and Seinfeld and Frasier. They're awesome.

Who's the most intriguing celebrity you have ever met and why?
I hate to always say the same one but probably Björk. She's my idol and when I got to meet her it was a big deal for me.

What's your secret geeky thing?
There are tonnes of geeky things about me! I love to roller-skate so I usually take roller-skates on tour so that in the big empty venues I can roller-skate before or after the show, or when I'm bored.

What have you been putting off doing recently that you really ought to get on with?
Wow! I've finally got to write songs and stuff so ... I don't know what to say. Calling my grandparents?

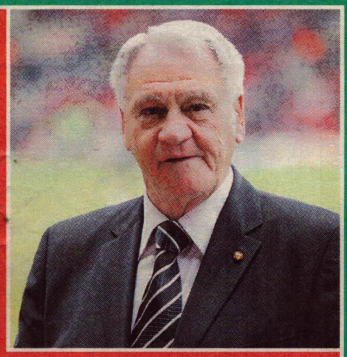
When are you happiest?
I'm feeling pretty good right now. I'm on tour, I'm in London and my boyfriend is here. I'm having a really good morning.

What's your motto for life?
Always be yourself. Try not to be changed by other people's opinions of you.

THREE LIONS

ITV football pundits and ex-England managers – Terry Venables, Graham Taylor and Sir Bobby Robson – talk to Funday about Euro 2004 and England's chances of glory

BOBBY ROBSON



Hi Bobby, what do you think England's chances are of winning Euro 2004?
I think we should all be very optimistic about England's chances. There is great belief that we've got a good squad, one that is capable of matching any of the other 15 countries that will be playing in Portugal.
Were you pleased with Sven-Goran Eriksson's squad selection?
I like the way Sven has been talking about his squad. He's full of confidence that he has picked the right players – and I'm sure he has. It's a well-balanced squad and you need that because England have got some tricky games coming up in the finals.

The opening game against France will be tough, can you see England securing at least a draw?
With the likes of Thierry Henry [left], Zinedine Zidane and Patrick Vieira, France has some of the best players in the world, but we won't be scared by anybody. Steven Gerrard has had a fantastic season for Liverpool and he's up there with the best of them, and then we've got David Beckham and Michael Owen. It'll be tricky against the French, but I'm confident that we can get a positive result.
Jermain Defoe is only on Sven's reserve list. Do you think he warranted a Euro 2004 place?
Sven has selected players with experience, and also some younger ones such as Wayne Rooney. Maybe he thought he did not want another youngster in Defoe. He's definitely one for the future. He has talent, is unrehearsed and he's spontaneous.
Do you think the England squad have any problem areas?
We've just not got that natural left-footer in midfield. None of the best wide players in the Premiership are English. It's a shame, but Sven has had to adapt and go with what is available.

TERRY VENABLES

Hi Terry, who do you think will star for England at Euro 2004 in Portugal?
Michael Owen will always do well in big matches. It doesn't matter how well he's playing domestically. He hasn't had a great season for Liverpool but he's had problems with injuries. In the major tournaments that he has played in, he has not disappointed so far and I don't think he will this time.
Who would you like to see partner Owen up front?

I would go with Wayne Rooney [left]. He is obviously very young, but he doesn't look like a young player when he's out on the pitch. He reminds me of Paul Gascoigne when he made his breakthrough. He's got the same self-belief, but he's not just confident, he's super confident!
Rooney scored some crucial goals in the Euro 2004 qualifiers, can you see him doing the same in the finals?
He will be raring to go, and he has been playing better for England than he has for Everton. As soon as he makes that step up to international level, he becomes every bit an England player and more. Wayne's exactly what we need and I am sure that if he plays, he won't let anybody down.

GRAHAM TAYLOR

Hi Graham, everyone is talking about England's opening match, do you think they can beat France?
I think England will be happy with a point from that match. People are saying it's a foregone conclusion, that if France are on top of their game, we're going to be fortunate to get something out of it. But I really don't see it that way.
So, how important is it that England win their first match?
The France game is going to play a massive part in how well England do, and how far they go, in the tournament. If we were to win, the confidence that would flood through the squad would be tremendous. On the other hand, of course, if we lose, then we'll go into our second game, against Switzerland, with a little bit of pressure, knowing that we've got to win it.

Which country are the ex-England managers tipping for Euro 2004 glory?

Bobby Robson: Spain
Terry Venables: Italy
Graham Taylor: France

Euro 2004 kicks off on Saturday with hosts Portugal v Greece, at 5pm, and Spain v Russia at 7.45pm. Both games are live on BBC1. Look out for next week's Funday when we will check out the footballers set to shine in Portugal

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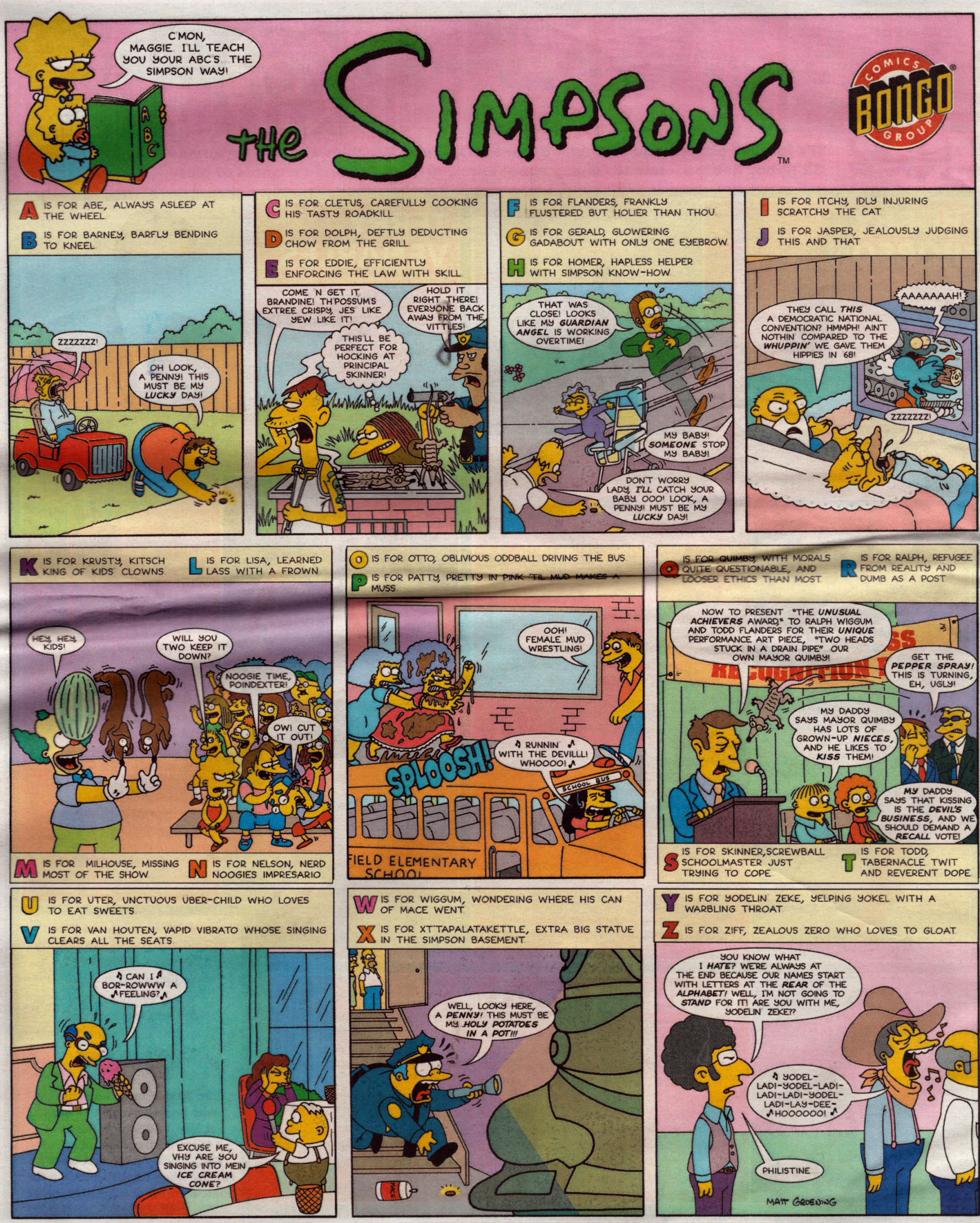
ITV1 will show France v England live, next Sunday, at 7.45pm



Story: Jesse Leon McCann Art: Phil Ortiz/Mike Rote

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